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# WAIFS OF WAR

AND OTHER STORIES  
OF FRANCE

BY

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To the  
Physicians  
of the  
American Red Cross



*Each American may write his own  
story of the war if he wants to.*

*This is mine.*



## LEARNING FRENCH

It was on Washington's Birthday that my journey to the seat of war actually began. Arrived in New York, passport and equipment arranged, there was nothing to do but wait for the date of sailing. One or two postponements gave more than a week of leisure with no inclination to seek amusement during those tense times. The very best investment of time would be to increase usefulness to the Red Cross by studying the language of the people whom I was to serve and this I did for several hours each day. A fair knowledge of book French and some familiarity with the idioms of other languages were a start but there was the usual lack of understanding the spoken word from native lips. I

found the way. A member of the State Department of Education from Central New York was at the same hotel as myself and gave me a card of introduction to one of the public schools. The first class I entered was taught by an American and at the end of the session I visited another class where the teacher was also not teaching her mother tongue. It was easy to understand their French—too easy, but not much help in the task to which I had set myself. When I entered the third class my search was over. The Parisian born, teaching her mother tongue to young Americans left nothing to be desired. When she greeted me, saw my khaki uniform and knew my mission, she could not restrain her tears. She was in Paris at the

outbreak of the war, a witness of all the sorrow and tumult, a helper as far as might be. She was already the fostermother of many over there—prisoners of war, refugees, disabled soldiers, Belgian babies—to whom she sent comforts which emptied her purse. She had been teaching her language for a quarter of a century as a language should be taught and it was a rare opportunity and my great good fortune to profit by her instruction. In her classroom only French was heard. By elaborating the lesson of the day and reviewing she brought from the lips of the pupils the sounds and words and phrases she knew would be most useful to me. And all the children helped.

The first skirmish in which tribute was paid to my khaki uniform

occurred in her company in an incident at an Italian restaurant where we went to dine. Our waiter, a big, husky fellow seemed to have some sort of a grouch but served us excellent food nevertheless. My companion was a regular patron of the establishment and always took wine with dinner, the customary service. This time none was served with the first two or three courses and we supposed there had been some new wartime restriction until we saw our neighbors were being served with wine. When our unamiable waiter, sullenly watching us from a distance, came again to our table we called his attention to the oversight. He roared at my companion and then at me that she could not have any wine, nor I neither, and when we regained our

breath from our surprise enough to ask why, he again roared that it was because I was in uniform. Rather proud to be classed with our boys in khaki for whom this law was formed, I joined my companion in an indulgence of animal spirits at the amusing incident that surely exceeded the content of a bottle of red wine. Our waiter was a foreigner and should have been in khaki, too. Women in uniform were not numerous and it seemed to us that only a foreigner hostile or very familiar with uniforms would have been so acutely conscious of mine.

Learning French was my chief occupation aboard ship. At the pier I noticed two nuns returning

to their home in France. Outside the rail were two others who had come with them. These were Americans and told me the others had come from Canada to New York and spoke only French. At my request they waved a sort of introduction to the French nuns on the pier and I then and there adopted them for the voyage. The superior sat next to me at table and the other spent most of the voyage seasick in her cabin. Every one studied French — men who were professors of that language at home listened eagerly to any native aboard. It proved difficult to sustain French with anyone who spoke English. Arrived in France, opportunity increased of course, but it was possible always to find



an interpreter and many did it and lost much in the interpretation.

## THE COMMANDANT

The Commandant and his wife were on their way to France after three years in service in New Caledonia sending troops to the scene of war. For twenty-five years he had been in the colonial service in Madagascar and now was looking forward to release from military duty and recuperation of health, not knowing the conditions to which he was returning. Little news filtered through to his territory in the southern seas and no one aboard could give him any reliable information. When a message was received by wireless addressed to the senior in rank on board, it



was delivered to him and the news was probably not reassuring.

He was easily the most interesting character aboard ship—keen, witty, broadminded, dignified yet with a twinkle in his eye that made one think of D'Artagnan grown old, with the dash and fire a little dimmed. And he, too, was a Gascon. His decorations were many and safe in the custody of his wife rather than in display.

He was not to be released in spite of age and infirmity but continued in service in France and stuck to the guns until the last shot was fired, for of such are the soldiers of France.

On board ship also was His Excellency returning after twenty months' diplomatic service in a Latin country, to his wife and his

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children and his home. There was another diplomat whose services in South America had kept one of those important republics with the Allies. There was another officer whose humbler duties for three years had been the purchase of horses for his army. One man aboard had been a teacher in a school in Mexico and had not seen his native land in eighteen years. He was a monk recalled to military duty as nurse or stretcher-bearer. Two nuns who proved to be poor sailors were returning from Canada after an absence of four years. Their baggage was scrutinized very carefully and the rumor aboard was that many a spy had adopted the robes of a nun and been apprehended and so no chances were taken with these dis-

tinctly inoffensive, loyal Frenchwomen. An opera troupe aboard was a more likely guise for such secret service but these were frequent passengers and well known in Paris. Few of the Europeans were in uniform until we arrived in the danger zone when the officers put on the uniform of their rank. There was the usual speculation about our safety because we might be carrying mail and other things useful to the enemy who would on that account spare our ship.

### AN INTERVIEW

Ship rumor had it that everyone on board was more or less under observation in addition to the rigid requirements for embarkation. One evening during the latter part of the voyage, while chatting in the

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salon, the gallant little aviator who had been instructing our boys on this side, came to me and requested me to go with him to the office of the ship's doctor to decide an argument that had arisen on a medical subject. The request appeared so ridiculous that I laughed but he insisted in all seriousness and at great length in his acquired English that he had been sent to find me and that his friends were awaiting me. I found there the diplomat, serious, distinguished; the ship's commissaire who seemed to be the ship's master, affable, courteous; a passenger whom I had not before observed whom they called doctor—a specialist in chemistry who was familiar with the products of my own home city; the aviator, with his blond head and red

trousers and earnest gallantry; and the ship's doctor as host greeting me fraternally.

I was ushered to a seat in the corner of the cabin with the bows and smiles of these five gentlemen. For my part, my feelings were not those of politeness. On the contrary I was disposed to act as I would with my own countrymen under the same circumstances and ask them what was on their minds. However such a question would probably not have been understood and their reception of me called for answering courtesy at least.

It was clear the medical argument which was presented to me was only an introduction. First I was thanked by them individually and collectively for the many kindnesses they said I had done on

board. For me, this may have been preliminary to throwing me overboard or accusing me of something but they disclaimed any such thought. They wanted to know what I was going to do in France, what America thought of France, what America thought of England, and many other things during the long session. My own mission was easy to explain. What America thought of France was identical with what the whole world thought. For political judgment of other nations I referred them to the men on board—members of the Army and other organizations. What they really wanted to know I was unable to guess but they probably found out, for they poured champagne and begged me to toast their country,



to toast my own, to toast our President. For the rest of the journey and later in Paris, they were like old friends.

## PARIS

Paris! The first glimpse of its beauties was from the end of an ambulance as it traversed the Place de la Concorde and the boulevards on its way to the hotel. Then a room on the top floor with a dormer-window and sloping ceiling and an outlook over the chimneys to the roof and flying figures of the Opera. It was to be an outlook also on the air-raids of the enemy in the nights that followed, when the city asleep in the white moonlight roused at the alerte that told of the hostile approach. A great city silent as a rural habita-



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tion, its boulevards half in deep shadow under the moon's rays, its houses shuttered, its people expectant, night after night roused to the sound of the siren screaming through the streets. The moonlight magic was broken by aerial explosions, the flight of planes, the circling and signalling of great searchlights, until it seemed as if the very stars had left their places and taken part in the phenomena.

Within a few days a new danger came from the skies. The alerte was sounded as usual and the people sought safety in their cellars. But the usual did not follow and there was confusion in the interpretation of the event. Another explosion and yet no aircraft visible in the morning skies, and other explosions and still no enemy

planes. By the second day the explanation was forthcoming but was scarcely credible—that a gun at an un-heard-of distance was throwing these bombs into Paris. So the “big bertha” came first and many times, a Jupiter really thundering in a clear sky.

The loss of sleep by the night raids was perhaps the greatest loss produced yet it could be partially compensated by sleeping in the daytime until the arrival of “bertha”. The loss of sleep is no mean factor in any case and many who had remained in Paris up to this time, left for the South—to get some sleep. Besides the enemy was not very far away and the refugees were pouring in from Noyon and Montdidier.

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It required several days in Paris to obtain the necessary papers of both governments to go about the business in hand. The great work of the American Red Cross at this time is a matter of record. My part in it was to assist in equipping those who might be sent to meet the incoming refugees at the railroads or on the highways. When the emergency was passed there was time to wander about the city, in the hospitals housed in old cloisters of centuries past, along the river bank, through quaint, narrow, old streets with their hundred surprises of architectual beauty hidden behind their angles, in the parks with their sculpture and their vistas, to the historic buildings and monuments, finding familiar names almost lost to memory,

and new names to be for future study, when, if ever, the war would be over and the perusal of books again be a pastime.

One should go to Paris when young and browse among the miles of book stalls from Notre Dame to the Louvre, and contemplate the arts and crafts of endless variety—painting, sculpture, decorative art, engraving, jewelry, etching, wood-carving, gold and silver and bronze creations, porcelain, pottery, arms, mosaic, tapestry, lace, textures, glass, pearls, brass, embroidery or any other product of human skill which are, at best, only an index of the treasure of the city. Youth then realizes and may thereafter dream of the reality; for those older, the conditions are reversed and a visit to Paris is the realiza-

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tion of dreams. Better late than never.

## STREET FAIRS

Not everything is beautiful that is interesting. The street fairs may subject one to unpleasant jostling and the likelihood of attracting to one's clothing certain little pests that were not mentioned much before our boys over there wrote home about them. The Parisians themselves, with characteristic humor, recognize their existence by a slight elision in word-play. These fairs have booths along the streets or the vendors may spread their wares on the ground, which is cheaper. At night everything is locked up in a box or bag, chained to a post or staple in the street and left until the next day.

A fair is held every Sunday up beyond the Montmartre just outside the city wall, where there is a settlement of people in shanties and all sorts of tumbledown structures scarcely recognizable as human habitations. Visitors do not come here singly even in the day time as safety is in numbers. It is said to be the rendezvous of that elusive gentry, the Apaches, but is probably tenanted by less noted vagabonds and unfortunates. At their weekly fair which extends parallel to the city wall as well as along the road for a considerable distance, there is offered for sale almost everything from fried fish to a button, a great collection of junk and yet a clearing house for the poor.



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Artistic things have ready buyers—books, pictures, brass, cabinets. The merchants may be men, women or the whole family. They do not vary much from the types of the French writers. No stretch of the imagination is necessary to credit them with defiance of law and order, and yet their only crime may be poverty.

Montmartre in days gone by, was said to be very wicked, with naughty restaurants and naughty actors to shock those seeking new sensations. And then came along some prosaic person who investigated and found that some very respectable Montmartrians earned a comfortable living by playing the naughty for the strangers within their gates.



## THE SURGEON

A wrong turn in the road on the first walking trip of the Spring led me into a woodland where acres of hyacinths nodded in the gentle breeze. Along the way were a few excursionists from Paris, here, where for years thousands came to make merry in those care-free days before the war. One group was an officer and his wife and four sons, and the red velvet of his cap was the welcome sign of the medical man. He gave me the right hand of fellowship and a welcome to his family circle. It is repetition to say that he was handsome. There are many handsome men in France. He wore the *croix de guerre* with citations and the insignia of twice-wounded. He was charming with

an enduring grace that lost nothing in the succeeding year of friendship. He spoke English with an eagerness for ever greater facility and his children shared his interest. A specialist in a large city of Alsace, a surgeon in the army, and now attached to the service of the great military hospital of Val-de-Grace, he lived with his family in Paris until free to return home and begin again his professional career. He was unusually tall and graceful, with large dark eyes and complexion of cream and roses, dignified and kindly, not easily forgotten.

### WITH THE SAVANTS

One Sunday afternoon's excursion, interesting in its novelty, found me sipping coffee in an up-

per room of a restaurant near Notre Dame, with a society of antiquarians devoted to excavations and old books. They were, for the most part, very old, the women somewhat younger. They met here once a week and sipped coffee or wine with the bread they brought from home, while they exhibited and discussed charts and photographs and some books from the first printing-press of Gutenberg. They probably do not yet know how I happened to be among them but accepted me cordially when they found me there. My escort was a doctor in the khaki uniform of the army of the East, a chemist and x-ray specialist. Wandering in the Latin Quarter in the silent streets of schools, he had answered my inquiries with the

politeness of a Frenchman, diffident of speech and not knowing a single word of English. He was a member of this society and invited me to accompany him and we sipped coffee while awaiting the other members.

The doctor was an infant in years compared with the other members but they appeared to look up to him as an authority. The discussion was not sufficiently attractive to keep me indoors in Paris on a beautiful day in Spring and the doctor managed to be excused to show me the wreck of the church nearby where the long-distance gun had found its mark. Here we were admitted because we were military as we had been earlier admitted to Cluny by the same magic sign.

## THE DEPUTY

He was the member of the Chamber of Deputies for the territory in which our hospital was situated. He spoke English, spoke it freely, too freely, we thought who heard him with amazement if not with a tinge of terror as he discussed the war in language not at all moderate. He denounced his country for having rejected the enemy's offer of peace, declaring that she would have gained thereby and been spared the added ruin that followed her refusal. He scoffed at those who refused to accept the musical and artistic creations of the enemy. It may be that he spoke so freely thinking he would not be understood except by the two Americans in the railway coach, but he probably well knew that in France it is



not safe to follow such a presumption even to speak Chinese or Persian. His eyes could not fail to see the warning affixed to the ceiling and the window pane of the coach and in every place where men converse: "Taisez vous, mefiez vous, les oreilles ennemies vous ecoutent." He apparently did not care if the enemies' ears were stretched to hear him. He was a socialist member. He had married a German, the daughter of a socialist. His own father had been a refugee in England during the Commune and his own life had its storms. Among his own people his name was received with grave countenance.

His card gave admission to a session or seance of the Chamber after a procedure of signing a card and giving it with the card of the

Member to a functionary at the threshold of an inner room. After a time comes the summons in stentorian tones to pass this threshold and wait. Then an official leads you through various halls and passages and stairways into the Chamber.

Every Frenchman smiles when he speaks of the sessions of the Chamber and expects the stranger to admit that it is noisy and undignified which of course no stranger would admit although he might find it so. All halls of legislature depart in this respect from the high standard of the school debating club where parliamentary law is enforced or the society goes to pieces. In the Chamber of Deputies it seemed as if the speaker did not have a fair chance, but he prob-



ably did. He was often interrupted and his disturber in turn interrupted by another with argument back and forth among several members while the presiding officer, busy in conversation, only occasionally became conscious of the general disturbance and used the gavel. Meanwhile many other groups carried on independent movements, paying no attention to the speaker. The marvel remains that out of all this apparent confusion decisions are reached and France speaks.

A second visit to the Chamber of Deputies a year later was attended by a charming little incident. The deputy failed to attend that day. Twice mademoiselle and I were about to leave but were urged to wait by an officer who

finally said "You are an American, and you, mademoiselle, are for this occasion an American and we refuse them nothing" and we were ushered into the Chamber.

The last visit with the Deputy was on a midnight return from Paris where he had been dining with the Irish delegates to the Peace Conference.

### THE SENATOR

The Senate was of course less turbulent than the Chamber of Deputies. The Senator himself conducted me up the grand stairway of honor to the room of the Medicis, said to be the most beautiful in Paris. He was often a fellow traveler on the train and we always conversed but I had not identified him as a Senator. He quite star-

tled me when in answer to my announcement that I was on my way that afternoon to visit the Senate, he smilingly declared that he would go with me and he did. He had been a physician for many years.

## COMMUTERS

Many Parisians are in reality suburbanites and commute on the leisurely trains for luncheon. They thus often became my fellow-travelers. They were of course beyond military age. Nearly all wore some badge of honor. Some were teachers in the Sorbonne. One was a distinguished explorer and his name is inscribed in the Louvre on the walls of the room that holds his treasures. His greater treasure of gallant sons lies on the field of

honor. Another was an engineer in the department of posts and telegraphs. His son was in the army of the East at Salonika and hoped some day to complete his dental studies in America, with the best dentists of the world. Another was engineer in the department of railways and highways. He too wore a mourning band for a son. There was an East Indian merchant whose son was here at school. Occasionally madame accompanied her husband. She was as a rule many years his junior and the children might have been in age the grandchildren of their sires. They were all very much interested in our country and in our President. They tried to learn our college yells as a first lesson in English and the effort and result were very funny.

The Odeon was not far from the railroad terminal. A lady next me helped me understand the play and instead of sauntering out between the acts as the whole audience does, remained to converse with me. Her husband had been for many years in the French commercial service in China and she and her father were both journalists there. After a little family conference they invited me to promenade with them after the play and we then sipped coffee at a table outside a restaurant on the boulevard. We were joined by an officer on permission in France, about to return to China. In Paris the ends of the world meet.

## THE NUNS

The American doctor was of French blood and looked it. He

was of very great service to our boys over there. Commissioned to find quarters for convalescent soldiers he took me with him out through Saint Cloud, round about Versailles, and out of the highways back into the fields where was a school building or seminary, once a hunting lodge or rendezvous for royalty. It was within the walls of a park and silent as were its hundreds of students who had left their books to repel the invader.

No one was visible but we chanced on the right entrance. At the farther end of a wide hall was a room where a very very old Sister sat sewing. We met on the threshold and then saw she was not alone but one of five all equally old. They arose in gentle greeting. The Sister in charge suddenly dis-



covered that we were Americans and uttered a little joyous cry that brought the others to her side and they pressed our hands and murmured:

“O America that saves us!”

## MONTMARTRE

A few days vacation were spent in Montmartre, my hostess a widow most of whose life had been spent in this region. Perhaps half a dozen times only had she traveled as far as the banks of the Seine. She knew there was a war which accounted for everything unusual. She may not yet know that the war is over. We lived on a boulevard—through an archway, past the concierge, into a court and up a winding stairway to her little partment on the third floor. The stairs

and floors were of rich dark wood that shone like a mirror. Cabinets and chairs and furnishings were also of beautiful woods. Heaps of fine linen were stored away in unsuspected little closets. The usual huge down pillow of red silk topped the elaborate covering of the rosewood bed. The whole apartment of two rooms and kitchen would easily fit into an ordinary room and yet it was comfortable and adequate for her needs. She had lived alone so long that she talked to herself aloud, the presence of a stranger not even restraining the habit of years. She devoted herself to me like my shadow, served me breakfast in bed and every night prepared and urged upon me camomile tea as a night-cap. Each morning I was called upon to de-

cline her company in my day's rambles and months later to persuade her that I could not bring her home with me. We tried to dine together at her table but her deliberation in eating and the long intervals between the courses would drive a hungry American to distraction. We tried to dine together at a restaurant in this region of famous inns, but she evidently knew them not, nor knew the reputation for gaiety of her neighborhood; so she conducted me on a long weary walk to the conventional dining-room of the chain system variety. Our adventure in amusement was similar. Carfare was no part of her experience and I was kept assured that our destination was right at hand as we walked and

walked to arrive at an ordinary cinema.

Montmartre is populous if one might judge by the night sounds which end at dawn. Through the open window, an unaccountable taste to the people here, came all the night the tramp of civilian feet and the rumble of traffic. All noise was intensified on these heights, especially the bombs of the air raiders and the crash of the "bertha".

### A MONUMENT

From the height crowned by the Sacre-Coeur is obtained a comprehensive view of the city and surrounding territory. Down the slope from the church and near the center of what is to be a masterpiece of landscape art, stands the bronze figure of a youth. The inscription

runs, that in the last decade of the eighteenth century this young chevalier had been stoned to death for refusing to salute a religious procession. That was all. His youth and martyrdom make their eloquent appeal but what is the message of this bronze boy? Did his persecutors repent and, with unheard of generosity, offer him this statue in reparation, or is it a warning to youth? The answer is said to be this: More than half a century after this event there came into power in this city a free-thinking or atheistic faction that found expression in the erection of this monument as a protest of another faction's intolerance.

## THE MADELEINE

In spite of my preoccupation from the sadness of the congrega-

tion, the absence of youth from chancel and choir and pulpit and pew, and the general impression of the presence of many strangers, gradually the compelling sweetness of voice and instrument penetrated my abstraction. It was Easter. The sermon became not only a spiritual message but a lesson in oratory from a master. Every syllable was audible without in any degree restricting the swell and cadences of the art, the clearness of thought, or the development of the theme.

In the course of reading, an expressive French word in italics is apt to have individual interpretation. I could not know that I should first hear the word *sangfroid* from the lips of a priest in the pulpit of the Madeleine as a synonym



of the deepest and holiest expression of the civilian courage of a deathless nation. "Let us preserve our 'sangfroid' " he exhorted. Two days before, on Good Friday, a sister church had been bombed, seventy-five women and children worshippers killed and many wounded. French gentlewomen working with us in civilian relief were among them, we learned, from the interruption of the work they shared and the news that gradually filtered through official reticence. "Let us preserve our 'sangfroid', even though at this moment the deadly messenger be winging its way to us".

On a subsequent visit to the Madeleine, on the feast of the patron saint of the Church, there was added to eloquence, all the bril-

liancy and warmth and dramatic gifts of the Latin. A preacher of no other blood, be he celibate or wedded, could compose and deliver with such perfect artistry, a sermon on a Madeleine. The peroration—an appeal to France, now suffering her fiery ordeal, to purge herself of sin; to Paris, to repent the habits of luxury and vice that have made her the *café chantant* of Europe, and with her beauty and wealth and intellect and grace of a Madeleine, inspire to noble deeds.

### NOTRE DAME

To Notre Dame the visitor comes again and again, in gray days or gold, in moonlight or mist, to view this temple of the centuries, this library of stones. Its story is the masterpiece of a great French

writer woven around the life history of an unfortunate hunchback, familiar to the French by his proper name, to us by his deformity. It was, therefore, with only mild surprise, on my first visit to Notre Dame to see a hunchback dart from a tiny recess under the organ, for a brief errand, and dart back again to his pedals.

## BEAUVAIS

My first work in Paris was as substitute for a doctor, assisting in an office, with a registry of available personnel and scouting throughout the city for medical supplies to equip doctors and nurses hastening to meet the refugees swarming the highways from the North. Two of these nurses had been fellow passengers on board ship and were thus early sent off in camions into the unknown dangers to arrive at last in Beauvais and serve there many many months.

My assignment from the first had been to the children's department of the American Red Cross Hospital for tuberculous women at Plessis-Piquet or, as the mayor had

recently adopted the name, Plessis-Robinson. The guide books describe this place on the other side of the hill from our hospital as a popular resort and the new mayor of Plessis-Piquet with non-Gallic taste stretched the appellation to our side of the "fold in the hills."

Our hospital was named the Edward L. Trudeau Sanatorium, but better known to the French as Chateau Hachette from its recent owner, the publisher, who had traced the history of this estate back to the original grant in the twelfth century. Its extensive park with an unsurpassed view from the terrace, was said to have been the work of the landscape artist of Versailles. The whole property was enclosed—park, farm, garden, and buildings—by a high

wall, and the approach, besides the main gate and avenue at the foot of the hill was the narrow winding road which may have been the moat of feudal days.

The children's hospital was outside the walls of the chateau property but boasted a wall of its own, and a small park and fountains and gardens and vineyards along the wall many feet above the narrow highway. It was several weeks after my arrival in France before I was free to take up my work here with the children who had been exposed to the malady which afflicted their mothers ill at the chateau.

I had scarcely begun my congenial task examining the children and planning their routine or special treatment, when I was summoned back to Paris and told that



the little experience I had as substitute had brought a request from the Department of Military Affairs of the Red Cross that I be loaned to them, to meet some need. It was to me a proud distinction which not even the maddening delay of military papers could entirely destroy. I was no less proud of the open envy of my fellow-workers, smouldering in their eyes, even with their unmistakable good-will. There was not a man or woman whom I knew, whether a chief of a bureau, the director of a hospital, or in any service whatever who would not have left his post for a field of work near our boys. Most of us of the Red Cross were disqualified for service with our military forces and could only trail along as auxiliaries, fulfilling the

duty assigned us as faithful soldiers; yet our enthusiasm and patriotism burned steadily in the atmosphere of the French capital and our red blood called us to danger.

There was often in the non-martial breast at Paris the feeling of a surrounding danger and this was intensified as military restrictions tightened. After disappointments and delays my official papers finally arrived and I went to Beauvais just as our wounded boys were brought in from Cantigny. This had created an emergency. Two nurses who had been my fellow-passengers aboard ship were here in hospitals and it was another of our ship's company, a gentleman of the South, who unexpectedly received me at headquarters. During the

ensuing weeks, with fine courtesy, he kept the balance of influence in our numerous household and transient hospitality, and eased the tension of our men thrown together in a new experience of a society wholly masculine.

These were days of anxiety and nights of danger, with always the expectation of an order to evacuate. It was the grim business of war at Beauvais. The first two days and nights the movement of troops to the east was continuous, the camions thundered by, filled with French soldiers covered with the white dust that frosted their eyelashes and beards and the blue of their uniforms. Every night the unlighted engines chugged away into the darkness with the heavy trains of supplies—the co-

veted target of enemy bombing planes.

It was the day before memorial Day that it became my priceless privilege to serve our wounded soldiers. Thoughts of the significance of the day were checked and no word of it allowed to escape the lips to those soon to be candidates for our thanks and prayers and tears.

### THE ABBE

On the train going North from Paris in the last week of May in the last year of the war, a young priest in cassock and cloak and wearing the "croix de guerre" with citations, seemed to welcome any friendly advance to conversation to while away the time. He spoke English because he had spent two

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or three years in study across the channel. He was very handsome and athletic. From the peaceful life as director of a seminary he was drawn into the vortex of war as chaplain and litter-bearer and was now returning from his permission. We were traveling towards danger and were in the military zone and the prospects were not cheerful. Before us were the scenes of nightly air raids, and, a little beyond, the doubtful battlefield, his destination; yet his brow was unruffled. He calmly munched his breakfast of bread and chocolate from a scanty wad of paper.

A year later he writes: "As for me after our meeting in the train from Paris, I was with my division and particularly with the —th Regiment of Infantry at two great

attacks, the first at the end of May and commencement of June, where we helped stop the German advance near Villers Cotterets; in the second, south of the Marne, the 18th of July, we attacked victoriously the Germans and forced them to retreat about four kilometres. In all the attacks I escaped injury in spite of the dangers and I thank God for having protected me so visibly. The end of the war was a triumph for us. We were in Alsace and the troops of my division were among those first who entered Strassbourg. In this last city I saw the most magnificent reception that one could imagine." And he adds, "That which we will not forget in France are the beautiful qualities of the American temperament which have so largely con-



tributed to raise our spirit and finally to give us complete triumph over our enemies.”

## BEAUVAIS

The town had been practically deserted for some time and as the night raids continued and the word spread that the enemy had vowed the destruction of the town, those who had remained began also to leave, with their household goods on any conveyance possible. Some went to the woods or the fields or the caves for the night and re-returned in the morning—the old men and women, the sick and even the insane. There was an immense grotto carved out of the hill, where hundreds slept—the white earth in arches and galleries and recesses and corridors with candles here

and there giving the only light, as at Christmas cribs in church.

The hotel was deserted soon after dinner, scant enough and advanced an hour to give time to reach a haven. Once or twice the raid was on before bedtime and in the dark sitting room, the one old man left in charge darted here and there among his few guests.

Day by day conditions were worse. The hostess could not even keep account and cheated herself. The few guests and transient military found the latchstring out, it is true, but little to be had within. Each morning gave evidence of the penetrating power of a bomb and the five-story hotel offered little promise of protection. One was an orphanage from which the children had been evacuated the preceding

day. Several hospitals were hit. Four bombs struck a public building, one of them straight into a well.

The prospect of much brick and mortar heaped on me and the labor of search by fellow workers of the Red Cross presented itself to my mind one night when a raid was on and buildings tumbled in a circle around the hotel. So next day I moved up near headquarters where I knew a pick and shovel were kept for just such emergencies and that our captain sallied forth to help after every raid.

### AN AIR RAID

The barrage was on. It mingled in the subconsciousness of sleep before awakening brought the thunderous orchestra of explosions.

The guns were near—boom, boom, always the same degree of nearness — boom, boom — sending its echoes to the near hills which encircle this little town. In this basin mingled the various tones of all the guns of the watchers on the hills—boom, boom, and the rat-tat-tat-tat of the machine guns somewhere in the valley—bing, bing, the iron rain on the tiles nearby, and sharply punctuating, the exclaiming bombs—one-two-three-four, and the answering roar of the guns silencing the crash of walls above the unhappy people. The moment's lull, now and then, sustained the ominous buzz of the hostile aircraft, persistent, penetrating, threatening, in an instant lost in the crash of the defending guns. Every quarter of an hour the three

steeple spoke in tongues always brazen, but now in the din, mellow as the voices of birds—marking time while death and destruction poured upon the little town. Then silence while the strained ear retained the ominous buzz of danger long after it had passed, to come again perhaps in reality with renewed terror.

It was all very near in this small town whose circle of hills is crowned with hospitals. The red cross of broken tile in the huge circle of quarried chalk within the open court, became a target instead of a sanctuary, and blood-stained and piteously symbolic.

Of these ill-omened visitors of the air, starlight and calm become the unnatural allies, but for the civilians herald of disturbance and

unrest. At the alerte, old men and women, infants and invalids, rise from sleep to seek places of shelter wherever promised. There is a knock at the door, a shuffle of feet in the hall, whispers, then silence and darkness within. The storm of shells rages and passes and then life is resumed little by little to the glad notes of "all's well" be it bugle or bell or gun.

Well, what to do during a raid—to stay in bed and take a chance, or to descend to the ground floor or cellar or cave? The wise ones have already explained through how many stories the shell can penetrate, the wisdom of descending and thus setting a good example, the need of seeking safety since usefulness depends on safety and the expense incurred by the trip



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here would be nullified by injury. After considering the chances my own decision was to remain in bed where the sounds of battle came and at times the house shook when the bombs fell a short distance away. The present comfort of the bed helped, as opposed to the chilly corridors and cave and the journey thereto in the midst of bombardment. To remain, fascinated by the tumult of the various sounds, to be a part of it, the new, the overwhelming, was irresistible. To be below where courage and good cheer and companionship prevailed had less attraction and there was always the possibility that the germ of fear might spring up and spread its contagion down there below. If I am ever to be afraid I want to face it alone. I want to

put down my impressions now while they are fresh in my mind. I decided that the next night I would shut out the sounds by pulling the down quilt over my head, but I did not as it was too hot and the present discomfort won against the remote—not too remote, one, two, three, four, but no others that night.

The fusillade was not the “eternal fusillade”. With it all there is the ridiculous side. In spite of every danger I always think of it as the Fourth of July celebration when the guns wake me up at home and the final crash after an evening of fireworks when the remaining “pieces” are all set off together. The thought has occurred here as a consequence that our celebration, which familiarizes our

small boys with these sounds, may have been discouraged by the "propaganda" whose fruits we are reaping.

### A FRENCH FAMILY

My home was now with a French family next door to Red Cross headquarters. The two properties were about equal in design and extent. There was the court in front separated from the street by high walls and the grille whose iron shutters gave any desired degree of privacy. The substantial house of two stories with central hallway, built on the small scale of such residences, nevertheless seemed roomy enough for even a large family. The garden, narrow and very long was also walled-in, with the usual postern gateway back

upon the bend of another highway.

This family of grandmother, father, mother and eight children—four boys and four girls—had not moved away. They had packed and hidden much of their furniture, however, so the little parlor became my bedroom. The children were intensely interested in everything American and were greatly excited by my entrance into the family circle.

We were twelve at table. Huge dishes of food in regular courses rapidly disappeared. The father cut off chunks of bread from the long loaf, having first made upon it with the knife, the sign of the cross. Cider was the table beverage for all. A request for a drink of water almost created a panic. No one there had ever drunk water

and they seemed to expect instant calamity to the rash drinker thereof. Soon it became quite a ceremony, for which the children strove, to serve the glass of water.

Bedtime was eleven o'clock, even for the four-year-old. The children are less vigorous than ours, but quicker in action. They are very affectionate among themselves, content to play together, and do not leave their own premises. They play ball by kicking it and so become quick and sure of foot. One evening, one of our games resulted in four casualties—the youngest in tears to her mother's arms, disqualified from the start, and the next youngest soon bowled over, and the next two sent spinning into the bushes, when the alarm of the

parents made itself heard above the gay shouts of the others.

Every night this whole family left the house to sleep in the woods for safety. They had their own little concrete refuge in the cellar, the cave. The first night I remained alone in the house, declining to occupy the cave beneath, which a direct hit would be sure to reach after passing through my bed. A short distance down the street, a bomb had sliced a house in two, exposing upstairs, an aged man and woman sitting, unharmed, at a table.

The second night the family remained at home, and every night thereafter, in spite of air raids. It would be ridiculous to think that the presence of an American had bolstered up their courage, of which they had plenty, but some



change took place in their minds. Not even the youngest would admit fear or whimper in the cave, during a raid. She was a little French girl, too proud to let the enemy frighten her. The grandmother had no fear. The parents feared for their children, not for themselves. The oldest boy, within a few months of military age, counted the days until he could enter the army, while his mother counted the days with different thoughts.

One night, after the ominous buzz of hostile planes had several times been heard directly overhead and had at last passed on and our own protecting batteries were silent, there came the sound of new bombardments in the distance which might mean the second return

of the raiders, but did not and we could not interpret their meaning. In the uncertainty, all remained in the cave except the father and son and myself who watched the fire of battle in the direction of Montdidier.

These were the days when the father returned to his home with grave face because of the day's news, but always in his voice the ring of hope as he told of the arrival, in ever increasing numbers, of the American Army. He could bear a few more reverses because already, from this event, his people had taken heart, with faith in victory assured.

During my assignment here in Beauvais in touch with the First Division of the Army, there were

many thrills. Each American shall write his own story of the war if he wants to, and this is mine.

It was our mission at Beauvais to supplement army supplies at need, and to furnish any possible comfort to our boys.

There were here as in Paris always a feeling of an enveloping unknown danger just beyond our field of vision. Through this surrounding zone must pass every one who came to our door. Sometimes it was a regular messenger with a tiny ambulance; sometimes a swift courier for supplies whose lack conjured up visions of indescribable suffering; sometimes it was a weary young officer with silent lips but whose eyes spoke of a soul seared by horrors witnessed; sometimes it was a youth with an ambu-

lance, returning to his outfit, who stumbled upon us by chance and carried away with him gifts of chocolate and tobacco to his companions long strangers to these luxuries, attached as they were to armies other than our own; often liaison officers, commissioners, clergy found ours the only open door for rest or food or transportation. Even the mail was sent and received only when a messenger and automobile were available for Paris. It was primitive, grim wartime.

Fortunately for us all, our supplies were in charge of a man from one of our Southern states who interpreted the spirit of the Red Cross as it was formulated in the minds of those at home who gave their labor and their money to

lighten the burdens of war. He gave and gave quickly, afterwards attending to the required details of records. No messenger to us endured an inquisition to obtain a supply of coffee or risked his self-respect for a package of chocolate. There was never a suggestion that our soldiers were not welcome to the things their people at home had provided.

## FOURTH OF JULY

Regardless of war we planned to celebrate the Fourth. At headquarters we raised a flag-pole in the center of the court and to me, the only woman present, our captain gave the honor of throwing Old Glory to the breeze while we sang The Star Spangled Banner.

The children next door had been busy since early morning, outside my window, whispering and scurrying round with all the activity of preparing a surprise. The result was a court decorated with flags and banners and festoons of gay colors and Old Glory in the place of honor. All day long the children were happy in the attention their display attracted, and doubly happy if the observer was an American. At the end of the day, the family awaited my late return with a special little ceremonial feast in honor of the day.

There was a ball game, of course, in the afternoon, and in the evening supper and entertainment at the canteen of the Smith College Unit.



The chief celebration, however, was by the French themselves in this military zone. They celebrated the day as if it were their own. Americans were few.

In the plaza is a monument to Jeanne Hachette, who defended the town when its man-power was exhausted and snatched victory from the assailing Burgundians. Now her deeds are portrayed on the walls of the great Gothic cathedral and her feast celebrated with full liturgy. Around her statue on this fateful Fourth of July were gathered representative groups of Allied soldiers, with flags and music and flowers and ceremonies. At the end of the plaza, with the artistic facade of the Hotel de Ville as a background, were ranged the French nurses with flowing veils

and arms heaped high with flowers; above in the balcony were the speakers of the day; in front the commanding officers, and each other group in its appointed place. I found myself in the midst of a hundred French medical officers near the section reserved for our troops.

Ours were the last to arrive and it was doubtful if they would arrive because of distance, transportation and war. In spite of their fatigue and dusty uniforms amid the red and gold and blue of the many officers, they were easily the center of interest.

There was the ceremony of the bestowal of decorations on soldiers, some still swathed in bandages, There was the acolade, the kiss on both cheeks, the pinning on of the

medal, the salute and all the pomp of military form, displacing for a moment the spectres of the operating room in the numerous hospitals nearby from which most of them had come. In times of peace the whole assemblage would not have been considered a crowd but every soul in the city who was able was there.

The crowning celebration was in the air against the limited sky area of the plaza. The airmen in their crafts sported above us, diving and tumbling and wheeling with whirling notes as if the very machines shared with giant glee the spirit of Independence. Huge airplanes, painted grotesquely in red and orange and blue and white and silver, with concentric circles for great eyes, mounted swiftly the columns

of the air, turned, and dived upon us in the plaza with terrifying speed, suddenly changing course to skim away low over the housetops, with exultant clamor, and mount again above our head with the revelling contortions and explosive breaths of a well-satisfied monster.

### INCIDENTS

One day a doctor from North Dakota, attached to the searchlight division of the Army came along in his little ambulance for medical supplies, and then offered to share with us his own scanty supply of an important serum, since we had none. He was tall and rather gaunt with nothing of the professional air, but on the spot demonstrated his professional skill and versatility by extracting an aching and

condemned tooth of one of the boys. In the course of conversation he casually exhibited a scar of transfusion. The history of the scar came to us shortly after from two sources, from his captain who praised him and from a nurse who visited us.

This nurse on her way back to the French with whom she served had joined company with some officers outward bound somewhere, and came to our headquarters for dinner with them. She was very handsome, with large dark eyes, well-trained, evidently the idol of the French and most certainly a delight to us in our sombre masculine household. She was from New York and in Paris at the beginning of the war. She went to the American Ambulance to serve and

trained for nursing and was with the French. We offered her our services including a bouquet of roses from the garden. Her greatest need, however, was a few yards of table oilcloth. We gave her the lead in conversation, content to listen and watch the play of her features, and she mentioned the doctor and his transfusion experience. It was a story probably many times duplicated in the war and of no great interest at most except for its novelty. It seems that one day the doctor came upon an officer, a lieutenant like himself, who on a reconnaissance, had just had his thigh shattered by a stray shell. The doctor applied first aid, bundled him into a motorcycle car and away to the nearest station, and then lay beside him on the



operating table and gave him the blood that saved his life. The nurse was on duty at the station and might have been called upon to give hers too.

One evening in this deserted town of Beauvais, came a dozen khaki clad youth rollicking down the street and with roving eyes scanning the shuttered houses for a glimpse that might cheer them on their way. They were with the French army somewhere in the neighborhood and with mutual surprise we recognized that we were all from the same city at home.

They might have been twins, these two handsome young men

brought into the hospital from Cantigny. Both had chest wounds involving the lungs, but with no disfiguring marks upon their splendid naked bodies. Death soon ended the agony of the young lieutenant and we buried him with his companions four deep in the white soil they had died to redeem. Often during these days there were not enough flags to drape the coffins of our gallant dead, nor people enough free from exacting service to the living to follow them to the grave. Today, our two ministers, who served the wounded, two doctors, and four nurses gave this last tribute to them all in the person of the lieutenant. Paths in the cemetery, strewn with fragments of shell from the last air raid held our eyes on the ground to the edge of

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the new-made graves and then above us, two miles in the blue, appeared a squadron of planes which passed above us and circled back in the direction from which they came—twenty-one, one for each year of the young lieutenant's life.

The departure of the First Division for another sector modified the work of the Red Cross in this region and I returned to Paris in time to celebrate Bastille Day, and soon after to Plessis-Piquet and Chauteau Hachette.

## THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

An infant crying in the night, not the night of the open air and the home, but the night of the cave, the shelter from the bombs that whistled overhead, the bed of straw on the damp earth and the croon of the refugee mother fumbling for her new-born. Soon both will be on the highway to swell the ranks marching towards the city. Their unaccustomed feet will miss the soft earth of the farm and their senses reel with the confusion of sounds. Cities like Paris, Lyons and Marseilles have received each a million or more from the country.

The agricultural problem, acute throughout the world before the war, now multifold, may well stagger even France, France always re-nascent, constructive, ready to rise

from disaster at the earliest possible hour. How overwhelming the disaster of war her devastated regions show! Men and women drawn back to the place that was once home give up hope and return to the city.

After three years or more of war, the soldier, the poilu, at the front, uncertain of the fate of his family in the invaded regions, suffering all the horrors of war, might easily have faltered at his task. He did not because there was nothing beyond, no hope in this world if the enemy were victorious. To his aid there came from across the Atlantic not only a brother in arms but a friend to comfort him.

The American Red Cross saw fit to undertake civilian relief in addition to its regular service to the

army. The crowded cities with the housing problem, the sick, the children, the wounded from the front called upon the widest resources of the generous American people. Various bureaus of relief were organized, the most interesting perhaps the Children's bureau. There were sub-divisions within each bureau corresponding to the divisions of a family, men, women, boys and girls.

The problem of tuberculosis in the civilian population of France, as of America and the rest of the world, loomed large. Dr. Hermann Biggs, New York State Commissioner of Health, had been in France to investigate and recommend measures of relief. As a result, in time, there were opened in France tuberculosis hospitals, one



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about seven miles southwest of Paris in an old chateau, the property of the department of the Seine. It is still Chateau Hachette to the French but to the Americans it is a tribute to Dr. Edward L. Trudeau of New York State.

During the latter months of 1917 the old chateau was put in repair under the supervision of Dr. G. of Baltimore. The details of his labors are his story and he will never tell. Without heat, or water, or comfort of any sort this young man came out from Paris every day, walking to and from the train, in the wet and the deadly cold of this section, all for France, to do his bit. Christmas day the Sanatorium Edward L. Trudeau opened its doors to the tubercular women of France. A few months later a

nearby pension or family hotel was put into condition to receive the children of the women installed in the sanatorium.

Meanwhile Dr. G. was joined by his college mate Dr. M. of California and it was my good fortune to be assigned to work with these two men. It was as if I were with the two best friends I have in the medical profession in Syracuse. Dr. G. completed his work and came home the day of the armistice, and Dr. M. and I finished ours several months later.

The Children's Hospital was at first called the Preventorium. Gradually the sick were separated from the more robust and when the barracks were opened it became frankly a hospital while the barracks were known as the Preven-

torium. The quarantine house received the children from Paris every two weeks. The hospital received them in emergency.

The children came to us mainly from the dispensaries of Paris but often in the arms of their mothers who trudged wearily up the hill with their precious burden. The fathers were at the front or had already made the supreme sacrifice that their children might be free. Primarily this pension had been opened for the children whose mothers were housed in the chateau, victims of tuberculosis, widows of the war or refugees from its fury, but soon its scope was extended to include other children who crowded the clinics opened for the thousands of refugees in Paris. A dispensary, however, was

early established in the chateau, the sanatorium itself, and the civilian population for miles around sought relief there for long-standing ills. The children needing hospital care were sent to us.

The years of war had left its marks on the underfed, nervous, rachitic, ailing bits of humanity. Little Lucienne had traversed the trenches of Rheims, carrying her gas mask, and ready to lie down at the sound of approaching shells. This was difficult for her because of her elbow, tubercular and immovable, and her school books and her lunch, for the children must go to school even in a town under shell fire. It was a weary journey for this terror-stricken child, whose mother had died during the war, whose father was a soldier, and

whose sister little older than herself was her protector and faithful slave. She never smiled—not until she was put completely at rest in the open air, and then, too, her sister had some respite. But when, at night, from Paris and its surrounding forts came the dread sounds of an air raid, these two children among the many others were the first to be sought for and comforted during the time of the raid.

Then there was Maurice who often had disturbed sleep from his rachitic body and always heard the first sound of the alerte. The tiny babies woke for their bottles, those two or three years old slept through it all, and the majority of the larger children lay quietly in bed and watched and listened to

the tumult. Aside from the air raids the guns were often very near and often the search lights crossed the sky and our own airplanes passed overhead. There could be no light of course for the night nurse to minister to her little charges and the babies wanting to be fed cared nothing for danger or anything else except their usual repast. After a time the din ceased and then was heard the reassuring notes of the bugle and the honk-honk which together made the berlocque or "all's well" and then the bells pealed out to tell the people of Paris that the enemy had done his work and escaped or had been prevented and driven away. They might, however, come again that night. All these sounds came to us clearly, seven miles from Paris.



Our children knew their significance from the experience of war.

Dispensaries had been opened in Paris by Americans—the American Red Cross and the Rockefeller Foundation—for the relief of the civilians long deprived of the service of their doctors who were with the army. From these were sent to us the children from an environment of tuberculosis, especially, or from homes which might predispose to that disease. Many were already affected or had conditions of eyes or ears or other organs plus the general malnutrition that goes with war. Their treatment was simple—first freed from insects by a bath and in clean clothes, they often slept the greater part of several days and with simple food and

open windows began almost immediately to improve.

Many children came directly to the chateau not waiting for the dispensary routine and our *medicin-chef*—that is our chief doctor who being an American and very modest did not use that title—never refused to receive them. There was Maguire, twenty months old, so thin that we wanted to keep him out of sight. He had been living with his aunt while his mother worked and she did not know how to feed him nor could she afford to give him anything but the coarsest sort of food. He was pitiable. Someone sometime before had attempted to give him a bath and had set him in very hot water and the burn was not yet healed. He had learned patience in his four months'

stay in a Paris hospital. He was discharged to make room for a more needy babe and at last arrived at our doors. His name was not "Maguire," of course, but a typical French Rene. He won a place in all our hearts instantly and received the best possible care.

One of the nurses was Irish of English blood but had the old time croon of the Emerald Isle as she washed the babies, and they understood and loved her and thrived under her hands. She called him "Maguire" and it needs reference to the records to recall his own name. He was discharged to his soldier father and his happy mother in the very pink of condition.

The chateau and its park date back to the eleventh century. One of its owners was Colbert and an-

other named D'Artagnan was probably not kin to the illustrious musketeer. Its last owner before the sale to the Department of the Seine was Hachette the well-known publisher of Paris who sold it for a site of a garden city. The park is considered one of the most beautiful in France with a terrace commanding a wide sweep of country. Here are now erected ten barracks for 180 children who arrive for a three months' visit in the country from their poor surroundings in Paris. They are in charge of a playground expert and her French aides. If sickness overtakes any of them they are transferred to the hospital.

Troubadour came that way. Troubadour the winsome, born in the heart of the great city near the

great market place. Think of a name like that! A veritable troubadour who will some day sing beneath a lady's window. Did he not instinctively lift and kiss the hand of a tiny lady of four years, his own age, who had been carried to his bedside for a change of air! She had been in a plaster cast for months outside the walls of Paris and left alone all day while her mother worked. Henri fluctuated from terrace to hospital as his condition indicated. His history card was brief—"a refugee all his life" of four years. His father was a prisoner in Germany and his mother nearly unbalanced by trouble.

Some of the children came from orphanages and schools in the vicinity when they were too ill to be cared for with the others. Many

of the mothers died from influenza while their children were with us. Charles came with his mother along the winding road between the walls, up the hill from the railroad. Walls, walls, walls, each one probably a barricade many times in the feudal days. There had been here somewhere a moat and a drawbridge and dungeons and the road twisted up the hill for greater defence to the chateau and the village at its gate. It had been called Plessis-Piquet until a few years ago—until the famous summer resort spread its prosaic name to this “fold” in the hills. Charles was born in Italy. His French father came at his country’s call and Charles became ill in France—so ill that he might easily have died from the walk uphill. Several months



in the hospital made no improvement and two days after the armistice his fight was over.

Robert was a six months' old refugee, one of seven living in one room nearby. Faulty diet brought him to us and the nurse did not expect he would survive the bath. He became a husky youngster in the course of a few months—and a well-known Syracuse specialist operating on a colleague in the chateau did Robert the service of removing an obstructing mass from his throat.

There was another Robert brought out from Paris by a nurse, desperately sick from the hour of his arrival, left in the open air day and night for a month and only now able to stand upon his deformed legs.

Open windows in France! A draught! Open air treatment! So incredible such a thing that nurses from Paris came to see with their own eyes their own French children sleeping with windows wide open, sleeping in the open air in beds or chaises longues. All the children in the hospital slept or at least reposed from noon until two o'clock and in the open air when possible. The improvement was so decided that the French maids were more than willing to do the extra work of carrying beds and babes up and down and in and out.

Armand, the blond, the beautiful curly head, took his midday nap early and woke when the others still slept. He was spoiled because he had been so very sick. His mother was a patient at the cha-

teau and one day Armand's sister was born there and came to live with us and grow and grow to look like him. He had other sisters and brothers and they all went home together.

The mother of Paul was a handsome intelligent woman—they are all intelligent, the French. His father was a soldier-orderly somewhere. Paul was nine months' old and large as a child three months' old. His mother did not tell us, but afterwards the neighbors did that he had cried for over three months. O Paul! How we tried to find out his ailment and cure him! We could not even soothe him as nearly every child can be soothed. When the air raid was on and the bits of shrapnel falling outside and he was out there under a sheltering tree we

could not bring him in because he could not be hushed. He slept there and disturbed no one. Even when we gave up the case his mother left him with us and at last one of our nurses discovered the way to the little man's heart was through the little man's stomach.

The children of France as compared with ours are much more docile because they lack the vigor perhaps. Their play is quieter, it is often said the children do not know how to play. They are joyous little tots like the whole nation, joyous. They seem years wiser than ours because they mature earlier. They are very much loved and petted but it does not spoil them as they are very gentle. They are plucky and not afraid although of course sometimes the "good

man" or fairy might come in the window at night. And then the air raids—well, they would not be afraid but then. One night it was a thunderstorm that fooled them, but the lights were turned on and it was all right. During another of the rare storms they were diverted by learning the American game, "peas porridge hot, peas porridge cold," until the storm was passed.

The morning rounds was a game of hide-and-seek, hiding under the bed clothes and bobbing up to cry "a moi," do it again, of the child the world over. The majority of them were too young for intelligible language and many had their own clipped speech. Roland, seven years old, lived in a land of dreams, joined parts of two words and had a perfectly good one for his own

use. He had a huge doll to which he confided his hopes that mamma would take him home Sunday—while mamma was begging us to keep him a little while longer. Gabrielle, four years, had a vocabulary to which our French nurse shut her ears and which of course was unintelligible to the uninitiated. Just before supper all the younger kiddies had an unmistakable language especially if no maid was in the ward. They just looked up to the ceiling and gently bawled with pure “ennui.” There is no other word. It is the reason for many things in France. A child sends word home that he has “ennui” and everything gives way before it. The child must go home because it has “ennui.” It is the “cafard” of



the soldier who wears a charm against its influence.

Juliette's influence in the ward was unseen, unheard, but unmistakable. Both parents dead of tuberculosis, her only relative, her grandmother, who was ill and not able to visit her, she herself very ill at times, she seemed to control the others and teach them many little things. She was evacuated when the American Red Cross closed its activities in this branch of work.

Suzanne was her neighbor and friend. She had come from an orphanage and her mother was dead recently of the white plague. Nobody liked Lydie and nobody could tell why. Everybody liked Desire. He was truly desired, little two-year-old. Marcel, like most of the children, was reared by a nurse in

the country and thus had two mothers or none, depending on the character of each. Marie Louise and Odette, tiny mites, were unclaimed by their relatives and will be reared by the government with the other thousands of war orphans, by France that looks upon them as her most valued possession, willing to do everything possible for their material good, unwilling to surrender them to better environment which might rob them of their birthright, unwilling that they should be anything less than the greatest citizens of the republic, heirs of the Liberty, Fraternity, Equality which is France.

### ARMISTICE DAY

Newspaper enterprise in France has not reached the high degree to

which we are accustomed. Certainly, in the allied papers of Paris there was nothing to prepare us for the actual signing of the Armistice, much less to give us a false report of it four days in advance. However, at eleven o'clock on November eleven, we heard the bells of the city peal out their joyous notes, we knew the vague rumor had become a verity.

Our whole household rejoiced in song and dance and tears. The children shouted and raced through the halls, climbed upon the tables to dance in joy for what they were too young to understand. National hymns were sung in turn, the French personnel yielding the honors to us who made victory possible, and we rejoicing with them who had so long borne the burden

of war. A general holiday was declared for them while the Americans took upon themselves the double duties in service to the children.

Great writers have described Paris in the grip of various emotions and doubtless this day will have its word painters. The people were there in great crowds marching through the streets or racing along in camions or autos, but those with whom they would have rejoiced the most were far away in the trenches or in their graves. There was scarcely any music. The students, with whom one associates Paris demonstrative, had no part in this historic pageant, spontaneous, international, heterogeneous. They were at the front. Strangers in khaki, British or American, and men beyond mili-

tary age or usefulness made up the minority of the crowd. It is safe to assert that no American in uniform walked the street unkissed on that joyful day.

In Place de la Concorde, one of our soldiers was haranguing the crowd in the soldier-French and English from the top of a taxicab. Nearby were groups of our boys and soon eight of them and myself were joining hands and circling round singing "Hail! Hail! The gang's all here!" Immediately we were surrounded and for an hour the boys sang for the crowd. They had been singing all the afternoon. At last we broke away and I begged them to let me contribute to the jubilation by standing treat. They finally consented and gallantly urged me to go with them

in search of something to eat—a difficult quest at that time. Instead, I accepted their escort as far as my train. Never did I meet a soldier boy of ours over there without a thrill of pleasure and pride and patriotism; never without the thought that our country would always be mindful of his service.

With Armistice everything changed. Hope of family reunion dawned among the French, home called to Americans, and hitherto absorbing tasks dwindled to sinecures.

### CANTEENS

Without the unstinted service of the American Red Cross in a dozen canteens in Paris I do not know what would have become of our thousands of soldiers looking for something to eat. Food was



scarce in the restaurants, prices high, and expression difficult. In the canteens, for fifteen cents, the hungriest boy could be satisfied. There was always an abundance of bread and coffee and meat and vegetables and dessert and there were tables to sit at. There were tobacco and writing material and music and a friendly word from one's own countrywoman. It might happen that circumstances sometimes left the boy without even the fifteen cents, but no one was the wiser.

After Armistice, when many of our soldiers became students in the University and elsewhere, the Red Cross opened a clubhouse for them in an interesting and comfortable building on the boulevard Montparnasse. The house-warming was

marred only by the scarcity of dancing partners for the boys. The walled-in garden had an added interest in that it was said to cover part of the area of the catacombs, rarely associated with this city.

Three of the soldier-students rented an apartment high up in a building close to the clubhouse in order to enjoy the comforts of home including home cooking in which one of them claimed and demonstrated his skill. They were studying wireless and were eager to have me see the wizardry of their classroom. Afterwards we visited the studios nearby, chatted with the young artists and gazed upon the doubtful beauties of the nudes. Two young models in street attire with whom we spoke, invited us to return at

their hour of posing. In one of the studios we met the sister of an American poet and soldier who died for France and is on their honor roll of dead writers.

### IN AN AIRPLANE

An American doctor of our staff invited me to motor with him to Versailles for luncheon with some Americans long resident in France. He said he had something to tell me which could not be confided until we were on our way. It was to the effect that another and not I was the invited one, a charming woman physician of our staff who had somehow failed him in this engagement. She was born in France of Russian parentage, her father high in affairs of state, recently deceased, her mother a physician in

her country. However, as the responsibility for the social event was not mine, I stood pat, and our hostess charmingly assured us that while regretting the absent one, none could be as welcome as a compatriot. This after half a century of expatriation.

On our way home we passed several aerodromes and at last picked up courage to enter. We did not know that it was a famous field. The two young officers in charge were aces, with the clear cut features and classic coldness that seem to belong to their class. They declared we were very welcome, that all Americans were always at home with them. One had been a prisoner, having fallen within the German lines in the second year of the war. He had only

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recently been released and was just now recovering from influenza. The other had been a pupil of the Wright Brothers. They asked us if we wanted to go up and that was just what we did want. I went first, climbing between the wires and having my feet guided to the proper places, finally reaching the seat and strapping myself in. Away we went, up into the air, free from terrestrial jolts, swaying in our flight and then skimming home like a bird, to give my place to the doctor.

### CHRISTMAS IN THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

For four years there had been no Christmas joy in France. Noel, Noel was a sad refrain. We determined to have an American

Christmas celebration for our sixty-five frail little children. Forty of them had been born during the war and all had been afflicted by it. Their Christmas needs could be easily met. The American Red Cross supplied all their wants even to toys, a necessary part of the treatment of a child in hospital. There was a closet in the wall from which came toys at need to make little folks happy and there was an all-year-round Santa Claus in the cha-teau nearby which was now a hospital where our children's mammas were sick too. But on Armistice Day this good Santa sailed for America to see his own little child and so we must try to do the best we could without him.



First, there must be a Christmas tree. There it grew right out in the park but the park belonged to the government which had bought it from M. Hachette for a million and a half francs. It was to become a garden city, but the war came on and stopped the enterprise and it was loaned to the American Red Cross, with the farms and chateau and other buildings that belonged to it. It was in charge of a man who had lived here a long time and we were not a bit afraid to ask him for a tree, because he was very kind and very handsome too, as he must be to wear the cap of the "Blue Devils" with whom he had served in the past. He dug up a tree just tall enough for the dining room and planted it in a box of earth and when it had finished its

Christmas service he returned it to the ground. And heaps of holly he gave us for immense festoons, and then he snared a huge nest of mistletoe on a high tree and cut it down for us and hung it over the door with a big rosette of the tri-color ribbon.

Toys and bonbons were very expensive as was everything else, but we knew that somehow we would have money to buy them because the children in the barracks on the terrace had received from a lady five hundred francs. This fairy godmother was once upon a time a little American girl and then she went to France to live. We went to our headquarters in Paris and received one hundred and twenty francs because there were many other children in hospitals who

needed Christmas cheer, too, and we must divide the supply. Then there came along a fair young girl who had been an aide up at Beauvais, and for our children she gave us four hundred francs out of her own pocket. There was in the same building a well-known Syracuse physician and his office staff bought and dressed dolls and gave them to us. And our French friends in our Red Cross selected toys they knew would delight French children and sent them to us with an invitation to draw upon them to the extent of a few hundred francs. And so we had more than enough for all our children.

Our great big dentist, draped in red blankets and bearded with cotton and gauze was Santa Claus.

Every baby whose scant hairs or whose baldness could hold a gay ribbon for five minutes at a time was adorned and carried, one on each arm of an adoring maid, to the Christmas tree. Every child received a doll, boys and girls, for boys play with dolls over there. Books and soldiers and glass beads and chocolate and puzzles and loto games and balls and animals on wheels and crayons, all were there to delight the hearts of these gentle little tots. They like crayons and blank books to draw and are apt in the art. The children at the terrace had donated to ours, for Christmas, artistic scrapbooks which they had made and they passed from hand to hand with much appreciation.

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All Christmas day the older children played downstairs, released from the usual two hours' repose after midday—a beneficial measure for these frail children, but the despair of those charged to enforce it. The tots of two or three years of age nodded at the accustomed hour and were carried off to bed while the babies demanded their bottles regardless of all the tinsel and baubles in the world.

The feeling among the Americans on this day, as well as on Armistice was one of self-renunciation, the desire to serve and give pleasure rather than to enjoy and receive. Among us there was little of the spirit and greetings of our own home land, and yet there was no discontent or morbid humor. We feasted on turkey and our econome,

or steward, who had charge of supplies, sent to our table two bottles of champagne, a special attention he had also shown us on our own peculiar holiday, Thanksgiving.

When the Christmas tree was dismantled and all the babes were in bed, there was rest for those who had spent Christmas Eve in Paris at midnight Mass in Notre Dame or the Madeleine with the thousands of worshippers of all creeds.

To me, at midnight, came the melody of wonderful bells in the clear cold air, pealing forth the joy of the Christ born after their dreadful silence in the years of war.

## THE PROFESSOR

We were often fellow-travelers to Paris with the same destination, the Sorbonne, where he had been a



student. He sometimes carried a New York paper but it did not occur to me that he might speak our language. Our real friendship began with the laugh on me. My boots were in bad condition having been repaired on the Avenue de L'Opera with some substitute for leather so my thoughts turned to footwear and comparisons. This handsome young officer's boots were of the kind I wanted and so I asked him where he had bought them. With a smile that was almost a triumphant whoop he told me. In America of course where he had been instructor for two years at Camp Travis.

One Sunday afternoon with snow and fog requiring my rain coat and rubber boots, I left the train at the side of this faultlessly

attired young man. He had told me he was going to wander around on the Ile de Saint Louis. I gave him every opportunity to go alone but he kept at my side for a considerable distance and we somehow agreed that we were going together. He knew the way to bits of third century Paris. We circled close to Notre Dame only to find the further gate locked and rather than retrace our steps he followed me as I climbed over, below the mocking faces of the hundreds of weird sculptured creatures that watch above. We went as far as Place des Vosges where Victor Hugo once lived, passing on our way the home of Madame de Sevigne. Many other places of interest were pointed out by my able guide—dim old courts, and gloomy

archways, narrow winding streets below ancient towers of past splendor, threatening doorways and menacing balconies, all teeming with historic events.

During our ramble, though we spoke French I learned that my companion was a professor of English in one of the large cities of France. He was also a writer and compiler of books for students of English. He was looking to a speedy release from military duties to return home to his wife and children and to resume teaching.

## LA SORBONNE

Mardi gras in the Quartier Latin! The traditional celebration of centuries, the right of students to make merry, easily survive a world war. Two days' vacation before

Careme culminates in Mardi gras when they swarm in Place de la Sorbonne and overflow the Boulevard St. Michel from the Seine to the Luxembourg Gardens. Orators mount the pedestal of the group in the Place and harangue the crowd of youth of both sexes in fantastic attire, who show appreciation of their eloquence by hauling them down to earth. Processions form and disband in a dozen different places. Huge, gaily-colored neckties stream out in the breeze. All sorts of flags and banners are unfurled. Shades of Tammany! A monstrous tiger is borne aloft. From its huge mouth hangs a Prussian officer seized by the waist, spiked helmet and glistening boots dangling on either side. "Le Tigre" is devouring the Kaiser. "Le Tigre" is the

idol of the students. When an attempt was made on his life, they were aroused and when the danger was past they held meetings and with wild cheers adopted resolutions to send to their beloved Clemenceau.

The Chapel of the Sorbonne faces the Place and the Boulevard. Its transept shelters the tomb of Richelieu, its founder. An artistic facade, splendid as a chief portal, forms one side of the court of the Sorbonne, and is reached by a wide stairway between the bronze figures of Pasteur and Victor Hugo.

There is something very attractive in this court to the sightseer who wanders in through the archway—the paintings of the arcade, the stone benches beneath, the wings where are the great library,

the amphitheatres and classrooms; the inscriptions over the doors especially that of Robert de Sorbon, founder of the University in 1253.

Though the name Sorbonne is synonymous with University of Paris it seems popularly to be applied only to the Faculty of Letters. Its great amphitheatre is a forum for the whole world as well as the theatre of university activities. It was here that President Wilson received the highest honors of the Sorbonne. It was here that the Society of Men of Letters rendered homage to the writers who died for their country. The audience represented the whole world, with the President of the Republic, General Joffre, and the beautiful Queen of Roumania



among the guests. Four hundred and fifty writers of military age, already recognized in the literary world, dead on the field of honor, were commemorated too in the Synagogue and Temple; in Notre Dame when the great towers awoke and pealed over Paris the deep tones of the bourdon and the carol of the lesser bells; in the Pantheon by the civic tribute—in that great temple dedicated: Aux Grands Hommes La Patrie Reconnaissante.

Throughout the Sorbonne, Art is generous. The marble corridors have beautiful paintings of historic places — Carcassone, Alhambra, Place des Vosges. The amphitheatres and halls are relieved of dreariness by wonderful artistic themes, of Apollo, of the Muses, of human

progress. The antechamber of the amphitheatre, the Salle des Conférences, where the distinguished guests assemble, is an artistic gem. Here as everywhere in Paris is produced the impression that the French know how to do things well.

Thousands of soldiers from the ends of the earth—New Zealand, Australia, India, Canada, United States—came here to see this ancient seat of learning, guided by lovers of the Quartier Latin in the various organizations allied with the armies. Beneath their feet in the court is the outline in contrasting stone of some former amphitheatre, just as in the Place of the Bastille the ancient prison is traced on the street, sidewalk and even through the present buildings.

From the Court, busy students pass to the library and the amphitheatres named for great men—Descartes, Turgot, Richelieu, Guizot—through a long wide marble hall which becomes a promenade between classes. Up and down, arm-in-arm friends walk and talk and so this has borrowed the name of a similar hall in the Palace of Justice where clients awaiting the law's delay pace up and down, up and down, in the Hall of Lost Footsteps, La Salle des Pas Perdus.

More wonderful than the home of the University are the teachers and the courses offered to the student and the public. The free courses are in all departments and on all subjects of human interest from aviation to vegetable physiology. The lecturers have world-wide

renown. Some of them are Americans.

The University and other institutions of learning in Paris prepared additional courses for the fifteen hundred soldiers of our army who were given this opportunity for study.

In these halls America seems very remote, and remote places very near—Russia, Serbia, Morocco, Madagascar. The audiences are remarkable—other teachers, business and professional men, officers, statesmen, who leave their work in the daytime to hear the masters speak, for here academic study aids the solution of all social problems.

Right on the minute the speaker is ushered in by the beadle. On his desk have already been placed a

pitcher of water, a glass with a lump of sugar and a spoon. Sugar was scarce but was daily supplied though rarely used to moisten the lips of the speaker. Charts, stereopticon, graphophone or whatever appliance is required to elucidate, is at hand and in working order.

It goes without saying that the professors of the Sorbonne are among the most distinguished men in France, that is to say, in the world. They have the ease of long tenure of honor. They are elegant, masterly, magnetic. Of course their diction is perfect, their enunciation clear cut, their discourse logical, for they are teachers here in the very home of the arbiter of these things, the Academie Francaise.

Our American soldiers who elected to follow the courses offered by the great institutions of learning in France found here in the Sorbonne these wonderful teachers. With a knowledge of French such as is acquired at home they must needs be content at first to understand only the spoken word. Soon all unconsciously they found themselves grasping whole sentences, then the theme, and then gradually carried along into realms of politics, philosophy, history, literary and dramatic criticism by the power of these masters to impart knowledge.

Naturally one of the most popular courses of lectures for our boys, on a familiar subject and so easily followed was that of Monsieur Cestre on the United States, her liter-



ature and civilization. He spoke of events about the time of our entrance into the war. With the psychological power of the French he held the mirror up to us and traced our national reactions as we ourselves could not. He had been professor at Harvard and had known there some of our now illustrious dead. One day he said: "The Americans have not forgotten La Fayette nor will France ever forget her debt to America."

Monsieur Brunot gave his lectures in his classroom called *Archives de la Parole*. A student is soon convinced that in this room the word is safe and the room well named. It is obviously impossible for the stranger here to do justice to these teachers, to record their achievements, or to know the ex-

tent of their influence. Monsieur Brunot is the author of a History of the French Language. It is evident that he loves his mother tongue, that its words are jealously cherished by him, and that he is pledged to protect it from corruption. He knows the life history of a word, how it was born into the language, its origin plebian or patrician, its sponsors the drama or historic document. The adventures of a word become an excursion into history and politics and art and life here in France where a word crystalizes the clash of castes, the diplomacy of statesmen, the trend of opinion, the intensity of nationalism. War lays its burden on language, too, and the guardians of the word are alert for its defense and its reconstruction and

its purification. The pupils of Monsieur Brunot are the future teachers of the language. There is no divided attention when he speaks. The compelling interest of the biography of a word would be incredible were it not a recurrent experience.

The lectures on the romantic drama by Monsieur Reynier are a continuous delight because he is delightful. With brief notes and readings he summons the authors to behold their own portraits and enjoy their own humor. No dramatist could be more interesting than this Sorbonne professor who interprets him and his works with sparkling intelligence and keen appreciation. One after the other they pass in review. They are startlingly near. They lived in this

very neighborhood, studied in these very halls, reveled in the nearby restaurants. Their dramas had their premiere down the street at the Odeon. The scenes are in the palaces and gardens of this vicinity. Their characters like themselves are French — kings and courtiers, cardinals and patriots, grand dames and musketeers, heroes and villians, victors and victims. Their prototypes saunter in the boulevard. Quasimodo still, in ecstasy, swings from the great bell of Notre Dame, Jean Valjean haunts the river bank, and D'Artagnan himself back from the trenches, "on permission" goes his conquering way in the Gardens of the Luxembourg. The authors are intensely French, true to the genius of the race, true to its virtues and

its vices. Were they not, they would not be received, for, in the whole realm of creative power, apparently unlimited, there seem to be definite things which are adopted or rejected because they are or are not French. So they preserve their nationalism and in the same way analyze and classify other nations with a penetration and a fidelity that make them the master diplomats of the world.

The lectures on Alfred de Musset drew a crowd that filled the amphitheatre to overflowing long before the hour. The splendid voice and histrionic power of Monsieur Michaut swayed his audience to the various emotions of the author. So too, the mellow tones of Monsieur Humant interpreting Tchekof and his Russian types de-

lighted and thrilled his auditors. In both of these courses of lectures there were surprises in the frank discussion of subjects which more puritanical people demand shall be merely mentioned or completely ignored. The eloquent lament of a lover whose mistress has deserted him, the reproaches of a wife who discovers the intrigue of her husband, the operation of the bodily functions, the intimacy of family life, in short, just as the French analyse, interpret, classify, probe and philosophize in the metaphysical, they portray, record, discuss, disclose and enact in the physical. They are natural, free, self-indulgent, joyous. That which is their life their writers may reflect and their teachers may interpret.



In all the other Faculties of the University — Medicine, Law, Science; in the schools—Pharmacy, Chartes, Oriental Languages; in the College of France, in Beaux-Arts, in Museums there is the same wide and rich field for study as in the Sorbonne. France does not advertise her advantages to attract students. On their part, they are deterred by idle reports of the difficulty of acquiring the language.

Our American soldiers studying in Paris were appreciative of the opportunities. They tried to profit by them but they had not known how lonesome they were to be separated from their outfits and their buddies and carrying always in their hearts and on their lips the one thought—they wanted to go home.

## RHEIMS

In the dark and cold and snow of a morning in February, I took my solitary way to the depot a mile distant, and on to Paris for the early and only train to Rheims.

Not a house in this beautiful city had escaped damage. It would seem to require the labor of thousands of masons for countless years for restoration.

We visited the Hindenburg line and the trenches and the deep chambers of the dugouts, treading carefully among the still potent instruments of war.

In the ruined city, some of the famous champagne cellars were intact—miles of corridors among thousands and thousands of bottled vintage. In the early days of the

war the enemy had held the city, doing no damage to what they confidently expected to possess.

## LES REGIONS LIBEREES

(Through the Devastated Regions)

We started out in a French government car with a French officer giving us his final instructions from the curb. The auto, dark blue in color, bore the letters R. L., for service in the regions liberated, and passed without challenge. We were bound for a remote village in the Ardennes which had been adopted for reconstruction by an American magazine whose representative had been endorsed and favored by the French government in her effort to see for herself the foster-child of her journal. She was of course an American with

unbounded energy, a well-known writer for many years, a school-mate of mine in the long ago and now met by chance in Paris. In her previous visits here in her literary interests, she had need of a photographer whom she found through London recommendations and whose acquaintance she was fortunate enough to renew on this occasion and engaged to accompany her to the adopted village, or rather, twin villages. He was an Irishman by birth and had been in every corner of the British empire with his camera. He had the mellow voice and humor of his native land, and the easy-going temperament of the cosmopolite—a check to impatience yet at need inspiring confidence in his masculine efficiency.

The secretary was a young French girl who spoke English and was a stenographer and could be interpreter. She was very pretty with a sweet voice and delightful accent. The chauffeur was a Belgian. He had been gassed and coughed much. He had no overshoes or gloves as no attention had been given to his equipment until we were well on our way and the sun was overclouded.

A Belgian, an Irishman, a Frenchwoman and two American women in a French government car bowled along at sixty or more miles an hour north from Paris. At Meaux we naturally thought of our countrywoman, the author, and would have found our way to her had time permitted. We stopped at Chateau Thierry immortalized

by our own soldiers. At Epernay we saw many of our boys and in the American Red Cross canteen met a well-known American woman who wore the *croix de guerre*. Naturally we Americans hailed every American soldier we met, much to their surprise, for in our enthusiasm we always forgot that they could not recognize us in our French car, three in civilian clothes, one in the horizon blue of the American working for the French, and myself alone in khaki which might be English and was often so mistaken to my great discontent, no stronger feeling being permitted among the allies. When, however, we were at last recognized our welcome was unmistakable and our boys formed our escort from place to place. We were even privileged



to peep into one of their kitchens where doughnuts were shaped with an empty shell and the hole with a smaller brass shell.

From Epernay our journey was rapid and we stopped only occasionally to stretch our legs, once at a little house where two old ladies related to us their war experiences when their house was headquarters for their own army. A few children came out to see us. Their shoes were fashioned from bits of uniforms, soles and all, and there was only one pair of wooden shoes.

In the evening we arrived at St. Menehould, a saint not familiar in our calendar. It was not yet dark but a wet snow began to fall and it was cold March. Here too, utterly unconscious of our own ap-

pearance, we felt the aloofness of our own few soldiers until we had approached them and made our wants known. They told us we had arrived at the end of the world as far as comfort or even shelter was concerned and that we should lose no time in securing accommodations for the night at the hotel. We were on the edge of the Argonne Forest and beyond there was only ruin and desolation except for military posts which we could not reach at night.

St. Menehould is picturesque but all impressions were lost in the overpowering sensation of cold. The only rooms available were in the rear of the hotel, without heat and light except of a candle. The linen sheets had no comfort for our bodies which could not be warm

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even with most of our clothes on and all the auto robes. A few hours sleep after a scanty supper, and the murky rainy dawn brought us to the kitchen fire for a scant breakfast. When we were ready to go and had heaped our robes on the table of what had been the cafe, our chauffeur and car had disappeared. We soon found him up the street visiting while the car stood open to the rain and his own coat spread out to catch its share. Then it was necessary to go somewhere to get an order to be permitted to buy gasoline and then a woman had to go with us to get it. After a couple of hours' delay we were again on our way, crossing the Argonne Forest, through the ruins of Clermont where we missed our turning

and kept on the wrong road for a considerable distance, to retrace and turn north.

All was ruin. The roads were cleared and the heaps of materials on either side finally forced the mind to realize that these shapeless masses had once been villages. It was appalling in its utter desolation. So for the rest of the journey it was miles and miles of trenches and barbed wire, of dugouts and barricades, of ammunition and arms, of shattered trees and wasted fields, and the wooden crosses grouped or scattered here and there on the wayside. No living thing moved here in the waste for miles and miles and miles.

Rain and snow had halted the repair of roads. Familiar signs in English, or rather, in American be-

gan to appear, about keeping to the right, traveling single file, and the emphasis that this means you which only a Yankee would post on the roads of France. Ruins were so common that we would easily have passed Varennes without suspecting the presence of the hospitable company of engineers camped here engaged in road repair, did we not see a soldier carrying a pail of water crossing the road. The rain was coming down in torrents as we reached this haven just in time for dinner in a warm room with corn bread and other real food steaming hot, and the warmest kind of welcome.

Since they were engineers it is of course expected that they knew how to make themselves comfortable. They were in barracks in

the territory held by the Germans for four years. In spite of the rain we descended into caverns which had held their guns and commanded the approaches. A complete system of lighting had been found by the engineers and transferred to their barracks. Their heating was by stoves made from ammunition containers of various sorts and scarcely an object in the whole camp was anything but an adaptation of salvaged material from the enemy's trenches. The piano, of course, had always been a piano.

There were over two hundred men in this camp and this day was the first anniversary of their organization and they were preparing for a celebration that night. They had invited some young



ladies and had to arrange for their sleeping quarters as they must of necessity come from afar. The boys had vacated the dormitory and were joyously spreading their own beds in the kitchen. Afterwards we met the party of the second part, twenty canteen workers, who had been safely transported over the perilous roads to help celebrate the anniversary.

The boys had many valuable souvenirs of the enemy as well as of the shattered dwellings in the neighborhood to make their habitation comfortable. By a curious chance they had a photograph from an airplane of the very village to which we were traveling.

We were reluctant to leave this cheery hospitable company and promised a return call but that was

not to be. They gave us helpful instructions so that we journeyed to our destination without further error. At Romagne we passed a Y. M. C. A. hut without stopping but the fleeting glimpse was to serve us well that night. On a hill top in the distance was an encampment of which we were to learn more. We saw negro troops at work along the road and inquired of their officers the nature of their work. They were disinterring the bodies of our soldiers in their scattered graves to remove them to the great cemetery at Romagne, where twenty-four thousand will sleep and be the shrine of holy pilgrimages for centuries to come.

From here our road was in bad repair and we thought of our return perhaps at night through the

skidding and pitching dangers. But we zig-zagged on and at last had a view of the ruined village, our destination, Landres - St. Georges. Our leader interviewed the mayor, the few old people who remained through all the cross fire of four years, and those who had returned home, in all twenty-five people of a population of four hundred. They were on rations supplied by the government every two weeks at a station five miles away. One young lieutenant was in charge here to look after explosive material lying around. Not a wall was safe nor a roof whole. The mayor's house was covered with American army waterproof, and his body clothed with parts of our uniforms.

When the Germans left the village they staved in the reservoir

where the villagers washed their clothes, so that the water poured in a continuous stream into the roadway and formed a deep rut. While we were engaged in exploring the village we signalled our chauffeur to join us and he ran into the rut and broke something. A horse pulled him out and he began repairs insisting that it could easily be done. After an hour or two with all the help the village could muster and breaking something else in attempting to repair the first, we saw that we were stranded in a ruined village where neither lodging nor food was to be had and night was nearly upon us. It looked as if we would have to spend the night in the auto in the cold. Our leader, undaunted by any difficulty, found a way. The mayor furnished

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two horses and an ammunition wagon without springs, and a driver to take us to Romagne where we had seen the Y. M. C. A. hut and were sure of shelter. The chauffeur was left with the car from which we took the cushions and sat as best we could on the bench or floor of the cart.

It was now dark. The driver was entirely shut off from us and we could not communicate with him even if it had been safe to move, and he could not hear us with the noise of the cart. The bench, a little too long, was inclined to slip over the tail of the cart and nothing could keep the rear curtains from slapping us.

Away we went in our springless cart over the road which in a fine car and sunlight had threatened

our safety, jouncing around and holding our tongues safely behind our teeth lest they be bitten off involuntarily. Yet we did risk a bite to eat. We had brought food from Paris as advised when setting out for the devastated regions and the unexpected hospitality of the engineers had spared our supply. We had shared it, however, at Landres with three young American soldiers who had just arrived on leave, walking all the way, and were now close to their destination. They were critically observing the walls and had selected the least unsafe in whose shelter they would build a fire and pass the night. They did not hint that they needed anything but the little bread and chocolate we offered were eagerly accepted. Wish it



had been more. With our little donation they would have a feast and the night would be warmer and in the morning these three boys would continue their search—each for the grave of his brother who had died in battle.

Judging from the way we gravitated in the cart, the course was down hill all the way; judging from the speed, that team of horses was all the way beyond the control of the driver. We could see nothing and hear nothing but the cart rattling on the road. Convinced that the horses were running away, it was with a sense of escape that we tumbled into a rut that sent our knees up to chuck our chins and throw us all into one heap. After that traveling was

easier until we arrived at Romagne and declared ourselves Americans.

The Y. M. C. A. was still open because an entertainment was in progress in the casino across the road. Word was sent for us to a medical officer as there were no accommodations for women at the Y. The captain-doctor had recently been host to a party of army nurses on tour and had done the honors so well that he was delegated to extend hospitality to us. Meanwhile the entertainment was finished and the soldiers swarmed into the hut and then came the entertainers themselves to be refreshed. They were a double quartette of negroes with their manager who toured the camps to amuse our boys. When they had drunk hot chocolate and eaten all

the good things offered, they repeated for us a part of their entertainment of song and dance.

The camp at Romagne was our negro troops, about fourteen hundred, with two hundred white officers and troops. It was this camp we had seen topping the hill earlier in the day. Our conversation about negroes from the point of view of American women was incomprehensible to mademoiselle and the photographer. However we were safe in an American camp and glad of shelter.

Here at Romagne, on a gently sloping hillside limited at both sides by other hills is the chosen resting place of our hero dead of the Argonne.

The doctor-host was the proud officer of a very recently equipped

hospital of corrugated iron, arched and sufficiently high to prevent the head hitting the roof, at least in the center. As yet there were no patients and the doctor used it as his sleeping quarters but cheerfully surrendered it to us because it had a stove. Our beds were placed as near it as possible but the wood burned out. Our heads touched the sides of the building and a hairpin striking the iron sounded like a general alarm on a huge iron drum.

Cold is a word commonly used to express a sensation but the frigidity of a corrugated iron shack, on a canvas cot, with hard fibred blankets above and below calls for the coining of a word more intense. We slept with all our clothes on except shoes and dress, with our overcoats for night gowns. A long

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fur lined coat just kept the balance of heat in the body. Mademoiselle slept in her sealskin coat and cap and everything else in reach and yet piteously during the night begged to get into bed with me for warmth. Since one of us would, under such conditions, be resting on a wooden rod we had to bear the evils we had. The doctor slept in the next corrugated tunnel and conversation was possible between us. We were on his mind and we were to call him if we wanted anything, were not to leave the shack under any circumstances, and were to remember the firearms with which he supplied us and himself. But it was temperature and not temperament that prevented or disturbed our sleep.

In the morning, the perfect negro orderly came in and made a fire and put some water on to heat. Soon after the doctor came shivering in and set up his shaving apparatus while we, the uninitiated in masculine toilet, kept our eyes closed or turned our recumbent backs to the scene. Then it was our turn as one after the other we rolled out of bed and applied ourselves to the washdish, while momentarily expecting the return of the orderly. Our toilets were safely finished before his discreet re-entrance. Mademoiselle allowed no temperature or emergency to interfere with her cold cream and other rites. Our photographer had remained at the Y. M. C. A. and stowed away as best he could in quarters overtaxed by visitors to



the entertainment. His morning face was sad. He did not complain of course as he hugged the stove. We were all cheered by a hot and abundant breakfast.

How our chauffeur passed the night we did not know. We were assured that a relief expedition would be sent to him and that we would soon be on our way. With confidence we saw the morning pass. Many reports from disabled autos came in. Right under our eyes a car was equipped for us with four brand new tires, but it would not go. When the relief party with our own car was due, we learned it had not yet set out. It was Sunday and there were some cars for the dominies going opposite to our direction. We dined. Our host seemed in no hurry to speed his

guests, a flattering attitude but at variance with our desire to show appreciation by an early departure and, since the object of our journey had been accomplished, to return to Paris. No conveyance was available for the long distance, nor even to St. Menehould. We planned to reach our friends, the engineers, and appeal to them to advance us but even the telephone failed to serve us. We could spend another night here but that did not appeal to our energetic leader.

Deep in my own mind was the hope that we might somehow arrive on that broad road from which we had turned back and that in our search for a way home we might be privileged to see the immortal city of Verdun. And we were.

In the afternoon an ambulance stopped at the door of our iron hut and its captain-doctor and his sergeant were served with coffee. They had brought some patients to camp and were returning to Verdun. What luck! This was our chance. They agreed to take us there and we could get a train in the evening for Chalons and next day to Paris. The road by which they had come was so bad that they had decided to return by another road, so we all set out contentedly in spite of the rain and snow. We soon found that whatever the condition of the road by which they had come, no improvement was seen in this route, but hope of getting better things drew us on.

There was not a habitation left standing nor a human being from whom to make inquiry in all this vast waste of a once prosperous land. We pitched from one hole into another in the little ambulance guided skillfully by the doctor where at no place was it possible for the four wheels to be on one level. No repair had been made since this road had borne the uninterrupted transport of war material and the holes were full of water which concealed the depths into which we must go to pass. Some of the crossroads had signposts from which the sergeant wiped the snow, and located the name on his map. At some places there were boards with the legend that this was such or such a village—this heap of ashes.

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We had expected to reach the river but were not sure of our crossing as many bridges had been destroyed. So we continued on this dreadful road long after we should have reached our destination, and then we whispered to each other the conviction long held that we were lost. We did not add to the worries of our guides by useless queries, but the doctor himself finally announced that we were astray and could only go on with the hope of finding some shelter for the night. Then we came to a road high above a railway and it was worse, if possible, than those we had passed, but the gallant little car and its able driver rose to the occasion. Then in the distance we saw the river and a bridge and a ruined railway station. The road

there taxed our car to the utmost and it plunged into a hole and stopped. The handle of the crank was broken and it was axle deep in mud.

From the ruins of the station a khaki-clad figure detached itself and came to us and other men came from somewhere to the number of four or five, and, under the direction of the doctor, with boards and chains and ropes and brawn and an hour's labor, pulled and dug and drove our valiant little car out of the crater. There were only a few of our boys stationed here and only two on duty at this hour, but what a comfort to know they were near.

We learned that we had indeed lost our way, that we were on the wrong side of the river and traveling north instead of south. We



crossed the bridge and on a perfect road sped away to Verdun.

All hope of a train had been given up. There was not even a guard at the station. In this ruined city there were said to be barracks of some kind for wanderers like ourselves but it was night and none of us knew the way. The doctor could not leave us without shelter so carried us two miles further on to the hospital. We felt like pilgrims at a wayside inn, but this was a wartime hospital in a devastated land. Supper time was past but we were served. In the nurses' quarters there were twenty cots or more in a cold dreary room for wayfarers but it was infinitely better than the prospects of that afternoon, and sleep was possible.

In the morning pancakes for breakfast and the luxury of white bread. Ordinarily an adult's attention is not unduly centered on food, but in this region of desolation army food seemed unusually appetizing.

Reporting to the authorities, there was a long conference about the stranded auto at Landres-St. Georges, and then the offer of another car to take us to Bar-le-Duc for a train to Paris. We were to leave at one o'clock. Meanwhile we visited the canteens. We met the young ladies who had been at the engineers' party at Varennes, and members of Vassar Unit who were here for reconstruction work.

One o'clock found us ready. The chauffeur was a handsome young man, bustling with misdirected en-

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ergy, grazing the curbs and skidding the slopes. He had been a taxi driver in Paris and we agreed he had the mien of an Apache. We dashed along a street of ruins when he suddenly stopped, leaped from the car and knocked at a door. The officer for whom we were waiting was there and came out to speed us on our way. Next we dashed to the camp of German prisoners to get something, retraced our way and were off. It seemed too good to be true and it was. In half an hour something happened to the air in the front tire and it continued to happen so that we spent two of the four hours journey standing on the roadside. The tube had already been patched eight times before it was placed at our service but it takes more than

a defective tire to keep our taxi man from an excursion. We would gladly have bundled ourselves aboard a cart of any sort to be on our way but all vehicles were returning at this hour instead of going in our direction. We could have coasted into Bar-le-Duc if the wheels had been round. It was now past train time and there was no need to hurry. It was an American who finally gave us a helping hand and we limped into the city on three wheels. Our chauffeur had many friends to greet him with much noise and laughter.

The two hotels were crowded, the streets busy, the restaurants normal. When we awoke at five in the morning there were American soldiers waiting for our beds who lost no time in tumbling in

after their hours of vigil. At six o'clock we were on our way to Paris and would not have been surprised at anything that might have befallen us.

### HOMEWARD BOUND

Paris, adieu! Two days at Marseilles before we went aboard ship. An old classmate and myself climbed the heights, descended to the wharves, ate the special foods, and listened to the fishwives bartering in the markets. The wonderful harbor had no suggestion of a busy port and a great commercial city. A battalion of small boats rode at anchor, while only an occasional cargo of shimmering sardines was brought to shore. The marvellous blue of the sea, the glittering hills, the temple-crowned

peak, the fortresses, the romantic island-prison lay in the splendor of a springtime sun—the theater of the dramas and tragedies of twenty-five centuries.

At the dock, a long line of our soldiers was going aboard, almost doubting, even yet, their good fortune—the fulfillment of their heart's desire—going home. They had short notice of departure and here they were actually going aboard. We waited and ship rumor said it was for more troops and they came and then a storm arose and we waited but at noon of the second day we sailed.

On the evening of the following day we anchored at Oran in Algeria, for coal, not the usual station and said to be an extraordinary proceeding. Never were boys so



happy as ours, late from the mud and the rain and the ruins of France, when they were given shore leave in this dry, warm, white city in gala attire that day, to receive its own returning foreign legions.

Our presence caused much surprise and excitement. We were unknown. It was said we were the first American troops to visit the city. The marines had been there and tourists also in days gone by. We were surrounded by such crowds during the two days' leave that it was almost impossible to progress.

The people are French, Spanish, Arabs, Moroccans, Jews, Algerians and others, especially, on this day when the returning legions were passing through to the interior.

The movement of the many different races in varied dress beneath the palms and the flowers of the plaza was kaleidoscopic. It was the living scenes of a hundred pictured pages, the actors of a thousand romances.

At first it seemed to me that the crowd surrounded me because of the novelty of a woman in khaki or because of interest in my companion, a boy in sergeant's uniform, who had served with two other armies and been adopted by ours, but a glance showed every American surrounded as myself by warmhearted and courteous though curious crowds.

Two young men had just offered to show me the places of interest, especially "le village negre," when a young French medical officer,

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catching a few words from the crowd, made his way through the circle and greeted me. We had often been fellow-travelers to Paris. Under his escort traveling was easy and we started for the village of the Arabs, meeting many of them on the way, picturesque in turban, gown and sandals. The women were robed in white and so hooded that only one eye was visible. Thus veiled they view the world from early womanhood until age has robbed them of every charm that might allure.

From the central plaza in the village of the Arabs, "le village negre," flanked by low white houses, we entered one of the many little restaurants wide open to the street.. On a rug on the floor were seated, crossed-legged, gray-beard-

ed Arabs playing cards, smoking and sipping coffee. I joined them, declining a chair which the doctor accepted. We were served a tiny cup of coffee prepared on the instant, hot and sweet and black and appetizing.

In the plaza, in the center of a large group of men seated on the ground a singer, handsome, vigorous, intense, swayed and danced and gesticulated and chanted to the music of primitive drums. It was a ceremony by a visiting holy man. From time to time, at a word, the audience touched brow and lips and breast with the rapidity of long habit.

On the second trip to this village we visited a school where husky little Arabs, five or six years old, sat crowded on benches, learning

French from their stalwart teacher of the family of the Prophet. They were all boys and each wore his fez in school.

The anteroom of the baths was furnished with many low couches. We entered for an instant the superheated room, separated by a heavy door and draperies from the anteroom. It was very large, fitted with pipes from which came jets of hot water to the bathers seated on the floor.

On entering the harbor we had seen many white domes which marked the holy places and now we visited the mosque, leaving our shoes in the vestibule. The midday worshippers were few. Devotions were long. One huge black man varied the upright position by deep inflections and by prostrations,

while another believer rolled his rug for a pillow and reclined in devotion. There was no furniture except the rugs on floor and walls and a simple shrine beyond the ken of the Christian.

On the second visit to the city we made the acquaintance of a young French woman who had spent her whole life here, had done her share of war work, and who had several brothers in the service of her country, which is France. On parting, she gave me from a slender chain around her neck, a "lucky hand" of Arabic workmanship. A bronze U. S. from my uniform seemed to her an inestimable return.

Oran is an interesting city with its palms and parks, its white earth and its mingled races. From



the harbor, the idea of the fitness of things is satisfied in the mountain which rises steep from the shore, its lofty summit crowned with a fortress. But after two days when the nearly naked Arabs had finished coaling by buckets, we sailed away through the Strait of Gibraltar over a calm sea to our own dear native land.

The End





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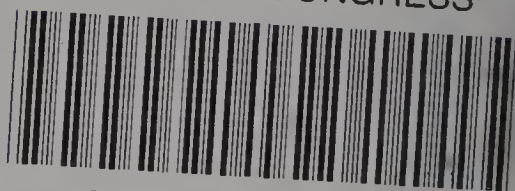
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